

ABSTRACT

A positive resist composition that exhibits excellent resolution and depth of focus, a resin for resists which is used in the positive resist composition, and a method of forming a resist pattern that uses the positive resist composition. The resin for resists includes structural units (a) derived from an (α -lower alkyl)acrylate ester as a principal component, wherein these structural units (a) include structural units (a1) derived from an (α -lower alkyl)acrylate ester containing an acid dissociable, dissolution inhibiting group, and lactone-containing monocyclic groups, and the structural units (a1) include structural units represented by the general formula (a1-1) shown below [wherein, R represents a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, and R^{11} represents an acid dissociable, dissolution inhibiting group that contains a monocyclic aliphatic hydrocarbon group and contains no polycyclic aliphatic hydrocarbon groups].

